

CSIP Thinking Process

Non-Regulatory Guidance Document

Constant Conversation Question #1: What do data tell us about our student learning needs?

Westlake Community School District

- This document is the first of four guidance pieces about how one fictitious school district decides to “think through” a process that will lead it to a clear, concise, and usable CSIP designed increase achievement for all students.
- This document is not intended to provide a “one size fits all” thinking process. The plan that will eventually emerge from the details that follow will be locally determined.

Guidance Document Key Points:

- The content provides a glimpse of only one district's thinking about Question #1.
- The content demonstrates a level of detail particular to this district's thinking.
- How much of this information will actually be placed in the Department's CSIP web-based system next spring will be determined over the coming school year.

The Westlake Community School District serves 1150 students and is comprised of one elementary school (PK-5), one middle school (6-8), and one high school (9-12). Many changes have occurred over the past several years. Since 1995, we have experienced a decline in enrollment. During the same time period, the racial makeup of the district has changed from 99% white to 96% white and the number of ELL students has doubled. Approximately 23% of the district's students receive free or reduced lunch and 17% receive special education services. County birth records and the Iowa Department of Education's projections indicate that enrollment should stabilize at the current level for the next five years.

1. What do data tell us about our student learning needs?

A. What data do we collect?

To answer question I.A., Westlake decides to "think through" a list of the assessments, surveys, and other building/district data it collects to describe student outcomes. The district divides the data sources into two broad categories: 1) those that include state and federal required data points and 2) those that include data that the district collects to gain a more holistic view of its students' needs—data from its local Data Driven Leadership (DDL) work. The district also decides that a reference to the specific grade levels involved and a brief description of how the data are compiled (e.g., biennium trend lines) is helpful to further guide its thinking.

The district collects the following required data: **(LRDA1)**

- Trend line and subgroup data for ITBS/ITED reading and mathematics at grades 4, 8, and 11
- Trend line data for ITBS/ITED science for grades 8 and 11
- Graduation rate
- Grade 7-12 dropout percentages (aggregate and by subgroup)
- Percentage of graduates planning to pursue postsecondary education
- Percentage of graduates completing the core curriculum (4 years of English, 3 years each of mathematics, science, and social studies)
- Career and technical education (CTE) student data (e.g., 11th grade participants' proficiency in reading and mathematics, program completers, and occupational competency)
- Percentage of high school students achieving a score or status on a measure indicating probable postsecondary success. Our district uses the American College Test (ACT).
- Trend line data from the Iowa Youth Survey (grades 6, 8, and 11) **(SDF1, SDF3, and SDF4)**
- A comprehensive, community-wide needs assessment which includes input from community members, parents, administrators, staff, and students (completed once every five-years) **(LC3)**
- Data from Iowa Collaborative Assessment Modules (ICAMs) for reading and mathematics at grades 4, 8, and 11.
- Basic Reading Inventory (BRI) data (grades 1-3)
- Data from the district developed science assessment (grades 4, 8, and 11)
- Participation rates for required district-wide assessments (grades 3-8, 11)
- Aggregate and subgroup attendance data (grades K-12)
- Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) data (grades K-3)

These data have been used to establish biennium trend lines, which are updated annually and reported in our Annual Progress Report (APR). Using National Percentile Rank (NPR) information from the ITBS and ITED assessments, we also monitor the progress of each peer group over time in the areas of reading comprehension, mathematics, science, and social studies. **(LRDA1)**

The Westlake district believes that the required measures of academic achievement stated above do not provide a complete picture of its students' learning needs. In support of this belief, we asked ourselves

this: “To what questions do we want the answers?” through our local DDL process and proceeded to collect and analyze information on a variety of other indicators including the following:

- District demographic data
- Climate surveys (random sampling of students 3-12)
- Basic Educational Data Survey (BEDS) data (e.g., course offerings and enrollment information by course/gender)
- ITBS/ITED data for other grade levels and subject areas (grades 3, 5, 6, 7, 9, & 10)
- Instructional time allocations (grades K-12)
- Student work/course grades (grades 7-12)
- Student discipline data (e.g., office referrals, suspensions, and expulsions) (grades 4-12) (**SDF1, SDF3**)
- Student participation in the district's breakfast and lunch program (grades K-12)
- Referrals to building assistance teams (BATs) and student assistance teams (SATs) (grades K-12)

B. How do we collect and analyze data to determine prioritized student learning needs?

To answer question I.B., Westlake describes the thinking/decision-making process it uses to collect and analyze the data from the student data sources listed in section I.A. as well as program/service implementation data. Emphasis is placed on describing how key stakeholder groups are involved in the district's decision-making process and clarification is provided in regard to each stakeholder group's role and responsibility to the process. Westlake also provides a brief description on how district information is shared with the community. Data collection and analysis is a shared responsibility at the Westlake district.

District Leadership Team (DLT)

The superintendent convenes a District Leadership Team (DLT) that meets six times per year. The team is comprised of general education and special education teachers from each building, the principals, and the curriculum coordinator. This group reviews information from Building Leadership Teams (BLTs) and collects and analyzes district-level data (e.g., Iowa Youth Survey information, graduation rate, and data from the five-year comprehensive community-wide needs assessment). In addition, information regarding the implementation of actions and activities to support current district goals is collected and analyzed to help identify future student learning and program needs. The DLT ensures that the action plans designed to meet district goals include specific outcomes for each activity designed to support the proposed actions. Implementation data on these activities is also collected and analyzed by the DLT. These data, along with implementation data from state and federal programs and services, are incorporated into annual conversations about supports for established student needs, adjustments to actions, programs and services, and progress toward district goals.

Building Leadership Team (BLT)

Each building in the district has a BLT that is responsible for the collection and analysis of the data related to its level. Each BLT consists of five teachers, a guidance counselor, and the principal and meets on a monthly basis. Members examine ITBS/ITED item analysis information and frequency data (e.g., the number of special education students and low socioeconomic students scoring at or below the 40th percentile), as well as building specific indicator data (e.g., other grade level assessments, discipline data, graduation rate, referrals to BAT/SAT, and attendance). This information is then shared and discussed with the rest of the building staff during monthly faculty meetings.

Stakeholder Groups

District and building information reviewed by the DLT and BLTs is shared with various stakeholder groups, including the Westlake school board, Westlake School Improvement Advisory Committee (SIAC), Westlake Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO), district patrons, and various community organizations.

The SIAC studies and discusses data from the DLT and summarizes the findings. The SIAC then makes recommendations to the board regarding district-wide prioritized needs, possible adjustments to CSIP goals, and the programs and services provided to students. The Westlake school board makes decisions based on these recommendations.

C. What did we learn through this data analysis?

To answer question I.C, Westlake provides a summary of the key findings from its analysis of data that were collected from the sources listed in section I.A. Again, this summary includes state and federal required data points as well as other data that provide a broader picture of students' needs. Reference to specific grade levels is provided as appropriate.

Through analysis of district and building data and comparisons with the state's student performance trajectories, the following was learned: **(LRDA1, LRDA2, LRDA3, and LRDA4)**

- The majority of trend lines on the ITBS and ITED assessments show little growth (flat lined) in reading, mathematics, science, and social studies. (grades 3-11)
- One hundred percent of our students participated in all district-wide assessments. (grades 3-11)
- BRI measures of reading comprehension show 40% of 1st through 3rd grade students are below grade level. This is a consistent trend over the last 3 years.
- Kindergarten DIBELS results on phoneme segmentation show 30% are in the lowest performance (at-risk or deficit) category.
- First grade DIBELS results on oral reading fluency show 20% are in the lowest performance (at-risk or deficit) category.
- Trend line data for middle school students indicate that student performance is decreasing over time in reading and math. (grades 6-8)
- Proficiency for 8th grade boys is declining at a steeper rate than the general population in reading.
- Performance (proficiency) of students with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) is below the state trajectory in reading and math. (grades 4, 8, & 11)
- The percent of low socioeconomic status (SES) students performing below the proficient level is below the state trajectory and the percentage of students performing in the advanced level are decreasing. (grades 4, 8, 11)
- Reading and mathematics proficiency of 11th grade students participating in CTE programs is lower than the district's overall average for grade 11 students.
- Graduation rates are high for the general population but are decreasing for low SES and minority student.
- The number of high school students completing the core (4 years of English and 3 years each of mathematics, science, and social studies) is significantly lower than the number reporting desire to pursue post secondary education.
- Students reporting that other students treat them with respect decreased from 58% to 47% from 1999 to 2002 in grade 8. **(SDF2, SDF4)**
- In 2002, 65% of 6th graders reported that other students treated them with respect compared to 41% of 11th graders. **(SDF2, SDF4)**
- In 2002, 65% of students in grade 11 reported at least occasional use of alcohol. This is up 14% from the 51% of 11 graders that reported on this same item in 1999. **(SDF2, SDF4)**
- Elementary attendance data show increasing absenteeism in grades K, 5, and 6, particularly within the ELL subgroup.
- Percent of student body referred to the office for disruptive behavior increased in each grade level from 7th through 10th grade. **(SDF2)**

In November 2002, the district distributed a comprehensive, community-wide needs assessment survey to 2,000 individuals, including community members, parents, administrators, staff, and students. Six hundred of the surveys (30%) were completed and returned. Through analysis of the survey data, the district learned the following: **(LC3)**

- 90% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that Westlake staff is accessible both during and outside of the regular school day.
- 85% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the elementary and high school facilities adequately meet the needs of students, while only 55% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the middle school facilities adequately meet the needs of students.

- 60% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that alcohol use among students is increasing when compared to five years ago. **(SDF4)**
- 75% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that student behavior in the middle school and high school needs improvement. **(SDF4)**

D. From the data analysis, what are our prioritized needs?

To answer question I.D, Westlake identifies the findings from section I.C that indicate the highest need for direct intervention, either through goal setting or through specific actions to support the established goals. Some of the needs identified are connected to specific academic skills while others are more general.

Based on the data reviewed, we developed the following list of prioritized student needs: **(LC4)**

- Improve reading comprehension for low SES students, students with IEPs, ELL students, and males in grades K-8.
- Improve vocabulary acquisition of students in grades 7 and 8.
- Improve mathematics performance at grades 7 and 8.
- Improve the attendance rates in grades K-6.
- Improve the learning environment in grades 7-12.
- Improve the district graduation rate.

E. How will we develop goals and actions based upon the prioritized needs?

To answer question I.E, Westlake describes the process it will use to establish long-range goals that support the priorities listed in section I.E. (These goals will appear in guidance for Part II: Constant Conversation Question #2: What do/will we do to meet student learning needs?)

The district leadership team and the Westlake SIAC will use the prioritized needs to generate and recommend goal statements to the board for adoption. The district and building level leadership teams in collaboration with community stakeholders as appropriate will design strategies and actions that align with and support the established goals.